

# The Graeme Park Gazette

OCTOBER—DECEMBER 2015



## Haunted Halloween

**Moonlight Tales in the Parlor**  
Graeme Park has long been said to be one of the most haunted houses in Horsham, with tales of Elizabeth's ghost dating back to the early 19th century. As recently as last month a six-year-old boy stated "this is the ghost room" when we entered Elizabeth's bedroom—clearly sensing *something* no one could see. On **Friday, October 30 at 7:00 and 8:00 p.m.** paranormal investigator and author Laurie Hull will be telling stories in the dark and creepy parlor of things she's detected in the Keith House, as well as in her investigations of other local haunted places.

As the author of *Delaware Valley Ghosts*, *Philly's Main Line Haunts*, *Supernatural Mid-Atlantic*, and *Supernatural Pennsylvania*, Laurie has extensive knowledge of the haunted places in our area. She is also adept at spinning tales through her experience as a guide with Grim Philadelphia.

Presentations will be made at 7:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on October 30 and the \$15 admission cost includes light refreshments, hot chocolate and (weather permitting) a bonfire.

### Mini-Moonlight Kids' Halloween Party

On **Sunday, October 25 at 2:00 p.m.** children ages 4–9 are invited for spooky (but not too terrifying) tales in the parlor of the Keith House, followed by an ice cream sundae bar and Halloween craft. The cost is \$10 for kids and \$5 for adults (at least one adult must accompany children; no drop-offs) and costumes are encouraged!

### Is Graeme Park Haunted? You be the Judge!

Stories of Elizabeth's ghost have haunted Graeme Park since shortly after her death and continue to this day. Much of the activity centers on the staircase, re-configured by Elizabeth's father, Dr. Thomas Graeme, in the mid-1700s. Shortly after Elizabeth's death in 1801 her friend Eliza Stedman reported passing her on this staircase. Mrs. Strawbridge, who owned Graeme Park from 1920–1958, once heard "the rustle of her skirts" as she went up or down the stairs, and our staff and volunteers have more than once thought they heard footsteps or voices on the stairs. Are we all imagining things? Or is there something to these stories? Even the alarm system sometimes picks up motion in this location. Come hear Laurie's stories on October 30 and decide for yourself. Perhaps you'll even experience something while you're here.



Befriend the Past  
The Friends of Graeme Park

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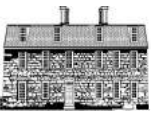
#### UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 25  
*Mini-Moonlight*

OCTOBER 30  
*Moonlight Tales*

NOVEMBER 28  
*Soldiers' Christmas*

DECEMBER 12  
*Living History Theater*



## GRAEME PARK



Graeme Park is the site of the Keith House, an 18th-century historic house, the only remaining home of a governor of colonial Pennsylvania. It is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in partnership with the Friends of Graeme Park, a 501c3 volunteer organization that raises funds, staffs, and promotes the site. The official registration and financial information of The Friends of Graeme Park may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Individuals who need special assistance or accommodation to visit Graeme Park should call (215) 343-0965 in advance to discuss their needs. Pennsylvania TDD relay service is available at (800)654-5984.

### TOUR HOURS

Friday - Saturday  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday Noon - 4 p.m.  
Last tour starts at 3 p.m.

### THE STAFF AT GRAEME PARK

Carla A. Loughlin  
Mike MacCausland

### THE PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

Tom Corbett  
*Governor*

James M. Vaughan  
*Executive Director*

Andrew E. Masich  
*Chairman*

### *From the President of the Friends*

Welcome to autumn! The leaves are showing their true colors and crisp, cooler temperatures are in the air. Here at Graeme Park, we are beginning our fall festivities with something for everyone.

School tours are in full swing and many thanks go to our educational committee for spending most of their October and November in seeing that hundreds of children enjoy their day at Graeme Park. They are treated to a step back in time and learn what it was like to live in the mid-1700s in colonial America.

Also on tap for the kids is our "Mini-Moonlight at Graeme Park". On Sunday, October 25 from 2:00-4:00, treat the kiddies to spooky tales in the mansion. The stories are ideal for ages 4-9. This is followed by an ice cream sundae bar and a fun-to-make craft.

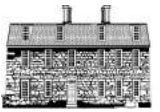
On Friday night, October 30, come out to hear Laurie Hull tell tales of local lore and legend in the Keith House parlor. Amid the eerie glow of candlelight, this published author will spin the haunted yarns which have been part of local history for generations. Her research into the paranormal lends a unique twist to these stories. Our shows are 7:00 and 8:00 and you are invited to cozy up to our bonfire before or after your show to hear some of Graeme Park's most time-honored tales.

Our Halloween programs naturally are filled with ghosts, goblins and, of course, jack-o-lanterns. Here's a colonial factoid for you. In the Graeme's time, pumpkins were not carved into scary faces and lighted with candles. Rather, the pumpkin was an important food source and crucial to survival through the hungry winter months. The flesh of pumpkins and squash were boiled, stewed, baked and dried to a jerky and the seeds were roasted, all of which provided sustenance during long, bleak winters. And when all things edible on a pumpkin were finished, the shell could be used as a bowl. So never underestimate the mighty American pumpkin.

Saturday, November 28 brings the return of "Soldiers' Christmas". Tour Graeme Park's grounds free of charge and visit encampments representing different wars to hear the stories of Christmas on the battlefield.

See this newsletter for more information on these programs. Hope to see you at Graeme Park before winter sets in and we're all sitting at home before a roaring fire, digging into our pumpkin jerky!

*- Beth MacCausland*



## Collection for Troops during Soldiers' Christmas

As part of our Soldiers' Christmas program on November 28, the Friends of Graeme Park will be collecting items to send to service men and women overseas. You may drop off items during our regular Friday – Sunday hours up to and including the day of the program on November 28 (please note we will be closed on Friday, November 27 for the Thanksgiving holiday). Items we're collecting include:

- Flip flops, men's and women's white socks
- Unscented soap, wipes, deodorant, shampoo, hand sanitizer, foot powder, Chapstick/ Blistex, moisturizer (*please note, all products should be unscented*)

- Saline eyewash, individual tissue packets, individual wrapped rolls of toilet paper
- Holiday decorations, individually wrapped non-chocolate candies, non-dairy creamer, small tubes of Crystal Light, 12 oz. bags or smaller of coffee, sugar/Splenda packets, nutrition bars, small bags of chips, cookies (*no peanuts, put in Gladware-type container if homemade*)



## NEWSBRIEFS



### New Partnership with Bux-Mont Party Rental

The Board of Directors made the decision this summer to enter into a new contract with Bux-Mont Party Rental as our tent provider and exclusive rental agent for the developing wedding business at Graeme

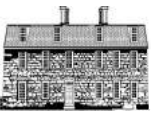
Park. The new arrangement has Graeme Park responsible for showing and selling the property, as it was felt that this would help us to take the business to the next level. President Beth MacCausland, who also happens to be a Certified Wedding Planner, has taken on the role of developing this business and has several contracts already signed and lots of irons in the fire. The OAA tent should be coming down in November and the BMPR tent will be installed in the spring. It will be the same size and similar style and will be situated in the same location as the old tent. We are excited for new beginnings and to continue to move forward with this business.

### Lunch & Learn

On Wednesday, October 7 we held our fall Lunch & Learn program on Foodways during the Revolutionary era. Long-time volunteer Mary Washington, who is an experienced hearth cook and reenactor, spoke about ingredients, recipes, and preparation methods to an enthusiastic group of 20. Participants were also treated to a Halloween version of the house tour with an introduction to the haunted history of Graeme Park by Board President Beth MacCausland, followed by a full house tour with Jack Washington and Jim Miller. Beth and Marie Cherry then served them a hot and cold lunch buffet of beef stew, hot roast pork, pasta, and a deli platter, along with coffee and dessert. We'll be doing another Lunch & Learn Program in April of 2016.

### Donations to Library

Volunteer Herb Levy has made a donation to the library of books on Colonial Philadelphia, the Revolution, Quakerism and early-American politics. They are available for volunteers who wish to read them. Thank you Herb!



# THE FRIENDS OF GRAEME PARK

## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Friends of Graeme Park is to provide on-going support of preservation, maintenance, development, interpretation, education and promotion of Graeme Park.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President Beth MacCausland
- Vice President Jack Washington
- Secretary Melissa Kurek
- Co-Treasurer Marie Cherry
- Co-Treasurer Diane Horan
- Member at Large Tony Checchia
- Member at Large Jim Cherry
- Member at Large Deedie Gustavson
- Member at Large Toni Kistner
- Member at Large Donna Mitchell
- Member at Large Gary Oswald

### STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

- Education Carol Brunner
- John Brunner
- Finance Bruce Rader
- Fundraising Marie Cherry
- Governance Jack Washington
- Grants Beth MacCausland
- Hospitality Vacant
- Insurance Vacant
- Legal Vacant
- Membership Donna Mitchell
- Museum Shop Carol Brunner
- Carla Loughlin
- Newsletter/Publicity Carla Loughlin
- Programs/Events Beth MacCausland
- Volunteers Beth MacCausland
- Website Tony Checchia
- Melissa Kurek

## THE GRAEME PARK GAZETTE

is published quarterly by The Friends of Graeme Park in cooperation with the PA Historical and Museum Commission

Editor: Carla A. Loughlin



# Befriend the Past

The Friends of Graeme Park



## Soldiers' Christmas

On Saturday, November 28, from 11-4 pm, leave the hustle and bustle of Black Friday shopping behind and enjoy a relaxing day on the grounds of Graeme Park. See living history displays depicting how soldiers celebrated the holidays on the battle-front during different eras and different wars, visit with Santa from 12-3 pm, enjoy musical entertainment, and browse for unique gifts and goodies from a few select craft vendors. Refreshments will be available and we're also taking up a collection for active duty military members serving overseas (see the list on page 3 of what we're collecting).

## Membership has its Privileges



### All membership levels receive:

- Free House Tours,
- Free Admission to All Non-Reserved Events,
- Quarterly Newsletter,
- 10% Shop Discount

See our website at [www.graemepark.org](http://www.graemepark.org) for additional member benefits.

Household \_\_\_\_\_ \$40 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$25

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

My check payable to the Friends of Graeme Park is enclosed

Please bill my Visa/MC/Discover Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Graeme Park, 859 County Line Rd, Horsham, PA 19044



## Living History Theater: Elizabeth Graeme's Loves & Losses

Elizabeth Graeme Fergusson was privileged and well-educated. She was engaged to William Franklin and friends with many men and women who made names for themselves in Colonial America. Her friend, Dr. Benjamin Rush, referred to her as a "glittering gossip" and she was a renowned salon hostess who surrounded herself with educated and talented writers, musicians, doctors, and lawyers.



On the surface, she seemed to have it all, but an ill-fated marriage to Scotsman Henry Hugh Fergusson and the subsequent Revolutionary War, in which Henry remained loyal to the British, were to drastically alter the course of Elizabeth's life. Her last years were spent in virtual seclusion. She alienated all but her closest friends, her husband returned to England while she fought to regain title to her ancestral home. In the end she did not know what became of Henry and she moved out of her beautiful estate at Graeme

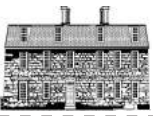
Park to take up rooms as a boarder in someone else's home.

Learn about Elizabeth's loves and losses on Graeme Park's Living History Theater tour, featuring costumed actors portraying scenes from Elizabeth's life in vignettes throughout the historic Keith House. Tours are being held on **December 12, every half hour between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.** and are \$10/person which includes light refreshments. *Please note: This program was rescheduled from August due to volunteer time commitments.*

## Homeschool Day at Graeme Park

On Wednesday, September 23 approximately 50 members of the homeschooling community participated in our Homeschool Day at Graeme Park. Kids and their families were able to experience hands-on history as they marched with the militia, wrote with quill pens, learned about cooking over an open fire and played colonial games. They were also able to tour the Keith House to learn the history of Governor Keith and the Graeme family, and were entertained by storyteller Robin Moore who tells tales about life in Colonial America and the Native Americans. This annual event is a chance for students who do not come as part of a public or private school program to engage with other homeschoolers and enjoy a program at Graeme Park.

Thank you to Pam Hawthorne, who worked the gift shop, Bill Sparke who did admissions and played colonial games with the children, Jack Washington, who ran the colonial school, Mary Washington who demonstrated hearth cooking, Jim Miller who gave house tours, John Brunner who drilled the kids in militia exercises and made rubber band guns with them, and Carol Brunner who organized it all.



# The Black Walnut Tree

By Jim Miller

There's a very good reason why it is called the *black* walnut. As one of the last trees to leaf out in springtime and first to shed its leaves in the fall, its branches are black and bare except for only a *very* few months each year. That is long enough, however, for its leaves to do their photosynthetic work and nourish magnificent growth with trunks reaching two to three feet in diameter. There are several fine examples at Graeme Park near the pond and parking lot.

Colonial carpenters and woodworkers appreciated the dark, rich color of the fine-grained wood and cooks, of course, found many uses for the nutty fruit. But one of the blackest, potentially messiest uses of the tree was in the preparation of ink. A typical recipe for making walnut ink calls for gathering several dozen nuts in their fleshy green husks. If the husks are bruised or have begun to rot, they are even better. In a non-reactive pot, such as a cast iron one, cover them with water and let them soak for a few days or even a few weeks. When most of the husks are black then it is time to boil the lot for several hours to concentrate it. Strain out the solids.

The addition of vinegar to the dark black tea will make the ink last longer once it is applied to paper. The entire process is extremely messy and it is not advisable to do this indoors. If your hands acquire black stains they are very difficult to remove.

Since the hull of the nutshell itself has a corrugated surface that resembles the human brain, it was thought to be useful for treating headaches. It was also effectively used to treat tapeworm infections, probably because of a chemical secreted from the roots that is known to

inhibit growth of many other organisms in its vicinity. Since this includes its own saplings, dispersion of the walnut population relies on squirrel activity to carry the nuts away to new areas.

Some excellent examples of walnut furniture found in the Keith House are the drop leaf table in the dining room, the Highboy chests of drawers in the master bedroom and on the third floor, as well as several side chairs throughout the house.



# 2015 Wedding Season

This year 15 couples chose to say their "I Do's" at Graeme Park and each celebrated with friends and family in unique and personal ways. For all of the details and photographs, as well as the weddings that hadn't happened yet as of press time, please see our blog at [www.graemepark.blogspot.com](http://www.graemepark.blogspot.com)



Lauren & David



Carly & Ron



Kathy & Bob



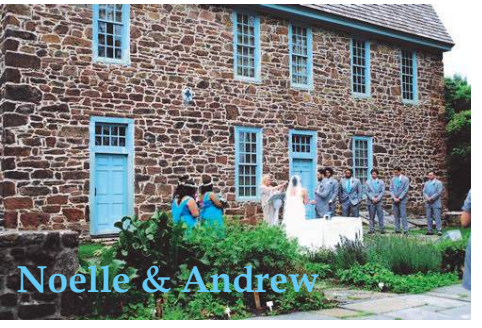
Tasha & Adraea



Amanda & Jimmy



Abby & Rick



Noelle & Andrew



Hye-Won & Tristan



Erika & Eugene



Kori & David



Katie & Andrew



Nicole & Mike



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859 County Line Rd.  
Horsham, PA 19044  
(215) 343-0965  
[www.graemepark.org](http://www.graemepark.org)

Address Service Requested

Mini-Moonlight: October 25 | Moonlight Tales: October 30  
Soldiers' Christmas: Nov. 28 | Living History Theater: Dec. 12



## *Compare & Contrast*

While it often seems as if things move along at a quiet pace here and not much ever changes, it is fun to look back through the centuries and realize just how much things actually have changed. The top picture, taken between 1898 – 1918, shows how much has been done to the exterior of the Keith House to restore it back to what we believe it looked like in Dr. Graeme's time, including removing vines, painting trim, reconstructing stone garden walls, flagstone patios (not visible under the snow in the bottom photo) and outbuildings, replacing the transoms and upper story windows, and perhaps most noticeably, removing dormers from the roof. All of these changes were made based on research, archaeology, and clues the building itself provided through the skilled reading of architectural historians, paint analysts, and other preservation professionals.